2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

231 their eggs in the silkworm's back and kill him. In about a month's time the caterpillar is full grown. He is then bundled into a fresh tray, in which there lies, wound about in the form of a spiral, a narrow-plaited bamboo strip. The ripe larvæ are thrown into this with as little ceremony as if they were pebbles. In about a day's time they have spun their cocoons, fastening them to the strips of bamboo. These are torn off and kept in baskets for a day or two, when a pot with water in it is filled with the pupæ, and then set to simmer over a slow wood fire.

283 From a triangle over the pot is suspended a small bamboo reel, and down below, near the pot, is a wooden cylinder. The reeler is usually a girl. She fishes about for a time in the simmering vessel, and, catching a few threads of silk, passes them over the reel and down to the cylinder, to which they are fastened. She then turns the handle of the cylinder, winding on the silk, and at the same time constantly fishing up and fastening on new filaments, which she does by means of a light bamboo double-pronged fork. Not the least trouble is taken to keep the silk clean. Any rubbish that may be floating on the surface of the water is wound on to the cylinder without an attempt being made to disengage it. When all the silk has been got off the cocoons, and wound on to the cylinder, the pupæ are taken out of the water and
[262] fried in oil to furnish a dish for the family dinner. They are not by any means unpleasant, tasting, barring the oil, very much like roasted chestnuts; and indeed the dish is considered a great dainty.

286 The silk-growers mostly sell their silk. A loom is to be
283 found in almost every Burman's house in the country; and
386 in Prome and Shwe-daung, as being close to the place where the silk is produced, great quantities of articles of dress are made for sale. The native-grown silk is only used for every-
[439] day clothes of simple patterns, the more elaborate being all worked from imported Chinese silk. The silk is bought raw, the separate filaments twisted into a thread by means of a wheel, and then made up into hanks; these are boiled in soap and water, and are then ready for the dye. The commonest colours are green, yellow, orange, different shades of red and light blue; black and dark blue are only in

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

favour with the Shans. The dyes are obtained from various jungle seeds, roots, flowers, leaves, and barks; the yellow dye obtained from the wood of the Jack-tree (*Artocarpus integrifolia*) being reserved for the monkish robes. After being dyed, the thread is unwound again. The weaving machine is very much like the old hand-loom still occasionally seen in out-of-the-way parts of England. The operators are almost always young women, and they are very clever at working the treadle and shooting through the shuttle, while talking all the time to village gossips or admiring swains. Some of the tameins, made for the richer women, are extremely intricate in pattern and require between twenty and thirty shuttles. The treadle raises and lowers the alternate threads of the warp. Except the rough dresses and the most complicated in pattern, however, not many native-made clothes are worn now. The townspeople prefer the showy and cheaper imported articles, and, though the Manchester goods are too frequently "doctored" and do not last long, yet this does not trouble the Burman much, for he is fond of a change of dress, and, unless he is very poor, will never wear a paso, except about the house, after it has been washed. All the more elaborate designs are, however, native made. The "dog's tooth" pattern is almost confined to Amarapura or Sagaing court looms, and since the fall of the monarchy is hardly seen at all. The acheit paso or tamein, of a complicated, wavy, sprigged design, which middle-aged Burmans remember as being the cherished object of desire of their young days, is now considered rustic. Young Rangoon will tell you that you may always know a taw-tha (a jungle wallah) at the pagoda feast by his wearing an acheit paso and nothing else except his turban; and although the waist-cloth may cost from 150 to 400 rupees, that does not redeem it in the town-bred youth's eyes.

286
283
386
[562]
[439]
[291]

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

—no doubt owing to the diversion of mind produced by banging away on the top of your roof, and the confidence and hope which the operation induces. Moreover, so much damage is done to the house itself that repairs take some time, which also serves to keep the mind occupied.

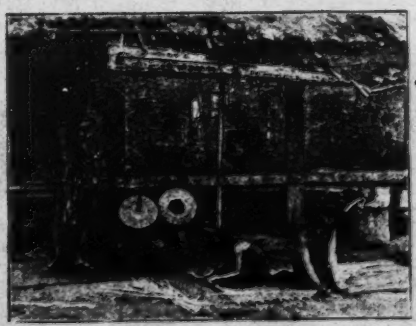
When the thayè tôpthi is over, the people return to their houses, where the pots with their consecrated contents are. The yellow string is unwound from the sticks and divided into lengths. Some people hang it all round the eaves of the house in little bags, others tie pieces of it round the left wrist, more especially those who go about much. At a time when there is cholera about, most of the young men may be seen with these wristlets. A Rangoon clerk detected wearing one colours with annoyance, and says his parents made him put it on. He very probably throws it away, but the same night he will have a fresh piece on. The thread is coloured with dye obtained from the wood of the jack-tree, the same which supplies the colouring matter for the monkish garments. The thabye bin leaves are kept in the pot, or scattered about the house. The tree is particularly highly esteemed by the Burmese. A species of it, the thabu thabye bin (the Malay apple, *Eugenia malaccensis*), is celebrated as the largest tree in the island which lies to the south of Mount Myinmo. Sprigs and leaves of the thabye bin are cut, prayers and supplications for absent friends and relatives offered up before them, and then the twig is thrown into a pot of water. A song has been composed about the tree itself, and is one of the most popular of those that do not belong to the category of love-songs. The jester in a play has always an unfailing draw when, wishing to testify his regard for some one, he declares he has cut down an entire thabye bin and thrown it into the river that his friend may enjoy good health. The joke lies in the contrast between this and the couple of leaves in a small pot used by people ordinarily.

It might have been expected that contact with English civilisation and doctors would have put an end to the riotous absurdity of the thayè tôpthi; but it has not by any means. In fact the house-beating goes on more vigorously in Rangoon and the larger district towns than elsewhere. This is

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

With the exception of the stuff for the recluses' robes, cloth is not dyed in the piece, but in the yarn. Dyes used for cotton are also chiefly imported, but the indigenous dyes continue to be used for silk. The Burmans excel in yellows, oranges, deep reds, and rich deep greens, which they harmonise with beautiful effect. Their clear blues and purples are indifferent. Except in a few localities, where weaving is a speciality, the men take no share in the industry beyond constructing the looms. Women spin and dye the yarn and weave the cloth. The lath of the loom (*lekka*) is of graceful outline—often elaborately carved—and is furnished with two ornamented metal pins, with loose metal rings, that jangle at each swing of the beam, and proclaim the industry of the young woman, to whom this business chiefly falls. Hence it comes that the loom is a favourite *rendezvous*. The same applies to other occupations of the girls, such as rice-cleaning, when the suitor will take a turn at the heavy part of the work and lounge while the sifting goes on. Common patterns of cloth are tartans, for which two or three shuttle-spools are required. The plainest cloth woven is at least shot with a colour different to that of the warp. The intricacy of a pattern is denoted by the number of spools. Scroll patterns (*cheik*) in silk are called *hun-tayá* (hundred-spool). The warp is a cubit wide and about twenty cubits long, which makes a man's loin-cloth (*pasó*). The piece is doubled and its edges sewn together along one side; the turn of the cloth serves as a bag or wallet, according as the piece is draped; it has no lining. The *pasó* is hitched round the loins and girt long or short, according to fancy, without the help of a belt; but elastic belts are now coming in. The slack is worn in a bunch in front (*kabdungza*) or is thrown over the shoulder.

126. BINDING THE THATCH.



127. PLAITING FLOOR-MATS (*see p.* 66).